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Wood Mosses

C. L. JACKSON

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Wood Mosses.

POEMS,

BY

CAROLINE L. JACKSON.

NEW HAVEN:

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Wood Mosses.

OVER THE MOUNTAINS.

Over the mountains the snow-wreaths are drifting,
Hanging their garlands on laurel and pine;
Robing the fields with a crystalline beauty,
Bending the feathery sprays of the vine,
Falling, like down, on the breast of the river,
Crowning the maple trees over the way;
Drifting along on the winds to the southward,
Hiding the vessels far out on the bay.

In the red sun-set the snow-flakes are shining,
Snow-drift on snow-drift and curl upon curl;
Flashing back colors of exquisite brightness,
Diamonds and rose-leaves and mother of pearl,
Softly ye snow-wreaths droop over the hill-side,
Where in sweet slumbers the weary ones rest,
Where by the pine-tree, my mother is sleeping,
Tenderly lay your white folds on her breast.

Come with a sound like the footsteps of angels,
Come, in the hush, in the silence of prayer,
Keep ye your watch by the eloquent marbles,
Wrap your soft folds round the myrtle wreaths there;
Soon o'er the hillside, warm suns shall be shining;
Soon shall the myrtles be purple with bloom;
Soon the green spathes of the lilies shall open;
Soon shall the clovers give sweetest perfume.

Soon shall a spring-time break over the mountains,
Over its beauty no cold wind shall blow;
Frost shall not breathe there to wither the flowers—
Never again shall they hide in the snow.
Eye hath not looked on that spring in its beauty;
Songs of the seraphs shall welcome its birth;
Come, in the beauty and glow of the morning,
Spring-time eternal, dawn over the earth.

RAINY DAYS.

I am sitting by the window where I hear the autumn rain
Drip, drip, dripping from the rose-vines; drip, drip, dripping on the pane;
Oh, the rain drops make sweet music in such gloomy days as these,
Playing with their fairy fingers on a thousand silver keys.

How the trees have lost their beauty; how the crimson fades
to brown;
What's become of all the blossoms, all that used to weigh
them down?
Not one vestige of its beauty now the lonely tree affords;
How the rain-drops on my window play among the minor
chords!.

Oh! how many lives have opened, lives that now are lost in
gloom,
They were full of brightest promise, like the spring-time's early
bloom;
Withered now and sere and faded, they are drifting as they
must;
How the beauty of the blossoms goeth up as idle dust!

When the Lord of all the harvests gathers up the ripened
sheaves,
Will He not look down in pity on the trampled, withered
leaves?
He, perhaps, will take the fragments, bear them to His home
above,
Give them beauty yet for ashes—nothing is beneath His love.

LITTLE ALLIE.

They gently laid the baby down
To take a long night's rest;
And folded both the tiny hands
Upon a peaceful breast.
They smoothed the threads of silken hair
Above his marble brow;
God bless and comfort all who mourn,
For many need it now.

They dressed him in the snow-white robe
He wore that holy day,
When pearly waters from the font
Cleansed every stain away,
And so they laid him, midst the flowers;
The little sleeper there
Was pure as God's own lily-leaves,
As innocent and fair.

Two baby feet to tread no more
The rough, hard sands of life;
Two white hands kept forever pure
From stains of blood and strife.
And now he sleeps a long, long sleep,
The large dark eyes are dim—
May God show tenderness to all
Who showed it unto him.

Look out beyond life's stormy sea—
A little watcher stands:
He's stretching out to call us home,
Those pretty, baby hands.

Christ keep the little angel-child,
  And lead those tender feet
All gently through the pearly gates,
  Along the golden street.

The sea of life rolls slowly on
  Through long, dark, weary years;
And grieve we that there's one the less
  To drink this cup of tears?
One more to join the song of praise
  That saints and angels swell?
God give us gentle, patient hearts—
  He doeth all things well.

CHRISTMAS NIGHT IN CAMP.

Our tents are white with crystal snow,
  With frost the flag-staff gleams,
The long, dark shadows come and go
  Along the frozen streams.

Oh, Trees of God! Oh, burning Stars!
  A Gloria I hear;
No voice from all this earth below
  Hath breathed it in my ear.

The banners hang their silken folds
  Our silent camp above;
And sweet and far, from star to star,
  Floats out that song of love.

I see the Shepherds on the hills—
  Bright light shines out once more;
I hear the cool, low wash of waves
  Upon that quiet shore.

I see the shining angel forms,
  Pure, beautiful and good;
They laid their hands upon my brow,
  And blessed me where I stood.

I see the group that artists draw,
  The Mother and the Child;
I heard the Virgin's cradle-song,
  The blessed Infant smiled.

For all the laurels of the war
  I would not lose it now;
The gentle touch of angel hands
  That rested on my brow.

I would not lose it from my life,
  That bright, undying gleam;
The smile that lit those infant lips
  I looked on, in my dream.

ECHOES.

THERE are echoes from the distance,
  Echoes that I often hear;
Voice of man, nor voice of angel,
  Ever breathed them in my ear.

Songs the little wild-birds sung me
  On the bright, green meadow-land;
Songs the river wavelets whispered,
  Washing, washing, on the sand.

Echoes of surpassing sweetness,
  All too beautiful for words;
Now like grand cathedral music,
  Now like caroling of birds.

Part the solemn starlight taught me,
  And the dark, blue silent skies;
Part the voice of one who loved me,
  One who rests in Paradise.

Visions I have seen in childhood,
  As I watched the ships go by;
Saw the purple wavelets quiver
  Underneath the purple sky.

Saw along the dark, blue arches,
  Summer clouds like snow-drifts pass;
Saw the shell-like apple blossoms
  Falling on the young, green grass.

And the gleams of silver moonlight
All along the mossy sod,
Spoke to me with strange, sweet voices—
Told me of the love of God.

Things I hear, yet understand not,
Neither shall I, till the day
Life's enigma is unraveled,
And the veil is rent away.

PREPARE THE WAY.

Judea's pines rear silently
Their everlasting crown;
The mountains cleave the rosy clouds,
And look in glory down.

And Jordan's band of living light
Gleams outward to the sea,
Where rise and fall the dark blue waves,
The waves of Galilee.

Oh! multitudes on multitudes
Are passing to and fro;
They look not on the sunlit hills,
Nor on the wreathing snow.

For the voice of one that crieth
Comes over shore and sea;
The voice of one who sees afar
The glory yet to be.

Prepare the way, oh, Church of Christ,
Hear thou the voice sublime—
Now, while the storm-bird's threatening wing
Gleams o'er the tide of time.

Prepare the way, although His step
Falls not on human ear,
He may be standing at the gate;
The Lord, the Lord is near.

UNDER THE ELM TREES.

TO EMMA.

THERE are violets half open, you can see them as you pass,
And the daffodils have budded, down among the withered grass;
I can hear the blue-birds carol, all such sunny days as these—
All my heart is making music with the music in the trees.

Never thrilled such sweet vibrations through a poet's throbbing song,
Sweeter echoes never floated all the forest aisles along;
Like some far off fairy music played upon a thousand keys,
Come the voices of the wild-birds, making music in the trees.

I can tell you in the rhyming of these simple, careless words,
How the flowers bud and blossom with the singing of the birds,
But my words could never tell you how in such bright days as these,
All my heart is making music with the music in the trees.

For the years of strife are ended, hushed the drum and bugle call,
And the blue and golden hearts' ease soon shall blossom over all;
Come what will, this year the clover shall not wear that fearful stain;
Come what will, the armed legions shall not trample down the grain.

Listen to the birds a moment—it is worth your while to hear
Songs of faith, and hope, and promise, for this golden, golden year;
Songs of patient, brave endurance for the ills the day may bring;
Listen till your hearts make music, with the music of the Spring.

TRINITY CHURCH, NEW HAVEN.

FEBRUARY 21ST, 1866.

GOD bless our grand old Trinity,
With heart and tongue we pray;
God bless the noble Church we love—
'Tis fifty years to-day,

Since first within these ivied walls
The choral chant was poured,
And prayers that made the Church, for aye,
All Holy to the Lord.

Oh! blessings on old Trinity,
To her our hearts have grown
As closely as the ivies green
That clasp her walls of stone;

For memories of the sainted dead,
Sweet thoughts that cannot die,
Are woven in the history
Of all these years gone by;

Since Croswell, truest priest of God,
Who won the crown unpriced,
Stood first a faithful minister,
To feed the flock of Christ.

And he whose voice went out from here,
A voice of power and might;
Sweet singer of our Israel,
Who conquered in the fight.

These fifty years they 've silvered o'er
The careless brow of youth;
And through them all, our Church has stood
God's witness for the truth.

And some who knelt to offer here
Their Christian knighthood's vow,
Have made their homes in other lands—
They are not with us now.

God's blessing rest on Trinity,
Until her work is done!
Her mission to the world fulfilled,
Her crown of triumph won;

And may her voice be true to Christ,
When other lips are dumb—
A faithful witness to the truth,
Through all the years to come.

DOWN TO THE BAY.

The freshening breeze comes upward from the sea,
The sails, like sea-bird's wings, flit to and fro;
All strangely beautiful they seem to me,
Whence do they come, and whither do they go?

Some coming near, so near we clearly mark
The eager throngs that press the crowded decks;
Some with their breeze-filled sails, half light, half dark,
Some on the dim horizon, purple specks.

Whence do they come, and whither do they go?
What do they tell us of the distant main?
Blue are the waves; the sea-winds freshly blow—
What they take from us, will they bring again.

The sea-winds bear the tourists on their way,
And one among them languishing in pain,
Pale as the lily, beautiful as day,
Ah! sweet Lenore, when shall we meet again?

They bear her where beneath a clearer sky,
Upon the classic hills soft sunlight shines;
There she must languish, fade away and die—
There in the purple glory of the vines.

Whence do they come, and whither do they go?
The cabin-boy is singing through the day,
While with each dark, blue wave that breaks below,
Weak, human hopes rise up, then fade away.

Weak, human hearts plan out their futures fair,
Glist'ning in gold and softest amethyst;
The sea-winds blow, our visions melt in air—
Gone like the mirage, scattered like the mist.

The soft, sweet sunset gleams upon the bay,
Bright from the oar the sparkling water drips;
The rosy clouds that wreathe the dying day,
Touch these bright waters, like warm, loving lips.

So may sweet peace come softly unto all,
And when life's sunset comes, oh, may we rest,
While o'er the waves the thickening shadows fall—
Our weary heads upon our Saviour's breast.

JESUS PASSETH BY.

Sentinel on guard to-night,
From the wood-encircled height,
Wandering in dreams away,
Where thy blue-eyed children play;
By the better thoughts that come
With a soldier's dream of home,
By this deep, dark, silent sky,
Know that Jesus passeth by.

Fair-haired child, from day to day,
Learning slowly how to pray,
Breathe it softly, God is there,
And thy little evening prayer
Goes as swift to heaven's great King
As the songs the angels sing;
He can hear the birdlings' cry,
Call Him—Jesus passeth by.

Soldier, in thine armor drest,
Honors' star upon thy breast;
Guarding with a jealous care
One soft curl of raven hair,
By the tenderness above
Woman's deepest, truest love,
By that soft light in the sky—
Soldier, Jesus passeth by.

A LIFE.

A LIFE that blended sweetly into one,
The passionate glow of Southern Italy,
The cooler lights and shades of English sky,
That life is faded, and its work is done.

A sad, sad life, when God's world was so fair,
It struggled on, and then, through bitter pain,
The frightened spirit sought its God again;
What have I left me? One dark wave of hair.

A lonely life, all in the minor chords,
One infinite in wisdom, willed it so;
And I, a child, I watched that sweet life go;
It left me, with a few, deep, thrilling words.

"Say, will you love me always?" As I love
All holy things, and beautiful and fair;
All lovely things in earth, and sea, and air,
And all I hope to reach in heaven above.

Could I break through this shadowy eclipse,
And find again that lovely, living form
So full of life, so beautiful and warm;
Could I but kiss those sadly, quiet lips,

Then would she know it was not all in vain—
Those deep words spoken to a careless child;
I lightly kissed her lips and lightly smiled,
Yet, in my inmost heart those words remain,

Too fair, too frail, for this unequal strife,
For steady labor through long, weary days,
For journeying along these thorny ways,
Drinking from Marah-founts the draught of life.

A life that seemed with some great sorrow bowed;
A care-worn brow, and shrinking, timid feet
That walked with trembling all your crowded street;
Walked sadly on, as under some dark cloud.

You may have met her as you walked abroad,
And wondered at those waves of shining hair,
That fair young brow so deeply marked with care;
The secret of that life was hid with God.

Beside me lies her Bible, soiled and worn,
The mould of years I see within, without,
And one sweet name that's almost faded out;
The leaves are loose and tear-stained, old, and torn.

Peace, oh, beloved one, holy peace to thee,
Sometime in the far future those dear feet
May tread the golden city's pearly street—
May fearless tread the pearly street with me.

Soft Summer suns above thee rise and set,
Thy long, long work of life forever done;
The crown that cannot fade, thy crown is won,
We are not safe, for we may lose ours yet.

This weary life begins and ends in pain,
Earth goes to earth, and dust returns to dust;
Yet, somewhere in the future world, I trust
That I shall clasp that living hand again.

The long, green myrtles wreathe above her grave,
Their purple bloom reflects the purple sky,
And lilies of the valley bloom and die,
And in the wind the flowering grasses wave.

And all is peace and rest, eternal rest—
Rest in this fevered world, the people's moan,
That through my dreams, breathes its sad monotone,
It wakes no echoes in her silent breast.

Safe in the haven, safe forevermore,
No more to breast the overwhelming sea—
No more to wonder what the end shall be,
Her bark lies quiet on a sunlit shore.

The soft sea-breeze chimes with my measured verse;
It speaks of things far off, and strange, and dim:
It often sings to me my mother's hymn,
Until I long for rest and peace like hers.

That low, sad song of life, that plaintive tone,
I know not what God has in store for me;
But this I know, wherever I shall be,
That song of life shall echo through my own.

THE PALIMPSEST.

A MONK was working in his cell,
He trimmed his failing lamps,
While on the gray stone walls there hung
The evening dews and damps.

A parchment lay before him spread,
And on that yellow scroll
The old monk fixed his fiery eye,
And worked with all his soul.

His hand erased a heathen ode,
And then he wrote above,
The blessed words of sweet St. John,
Beginning, "God is Love."

One wish alone impelled his hand,
One earnest, strong desire,
That would have nerved his spirit through
A martyrdom of fire.

To cleanse away the heathen words
Upon that parchment scroll,
And with those words to cleanse away
The shadows from his soul;

In dim old mediæval time
His light went dimly down;
I know not if his spirit won
The thorn-wreath or the crown.

I know not if the heathen words
Had faded from his soul;
I know not what was written last
Upon that parchment scroll.

The palimpsest an emblem seems,
A symbol of the soul;
And all our life we're tracing words
Upon the mystic scroll.

The lips may murmur holy words,
But fearfully within;
The scroll may be all written o'er
With heathen words of sin.

Those dark lines must be cleansed away;
Erase them one by one,
Lest when the waiting angel calls,
Your work be half undone.

Trust not the work already done,
For when this life is past,
It may be God will judge us all
By what we've written last.

THE NEW YEAR, IN 1866.

So drift we from the ragged rocks and quicksands,
Out where fair winds blow over sunny seas,
So the spent clouds lit up with golden glory
Fade down the sky; so dawns the year of peace.

Oh, year of golden hope, of brilliant promise,
Oh, gentle winds, oh, shining, tranquil sea,
Through long, long nights we kept our painful vigils,
And saw through clouds the glories yet to be.

Now stands this people in the van of nations,
Chastened by grief, through suffering made strong,
Forever pledged to words and deeds of glory,
Forever pledged against all deeds of wrong.

As stood the knights of old in dark cathedrals,
Keeping their vigils in the gathering glooms,
All armed for battle, while through aisles and arches
The dim lamps shone upon their father's tombs,

So have we stood—this land our great cathedral,
Our arched roof, the solemn starry night;
So were the years gone by our weary vigils;
So has the morning found us, strong in might.

Oh, people taught of God through storms and tempests,
Now on the page of time a record write,
In golden characters of fadeless beauty,
Words that shall live when others fade in night.

Land of our love, oh, glorious things are written,
Men read them in the horoscope of time;
Far greener wreaths and brighter conquest wait thee,
God guide thee in thy destiny sublime!

IN PEACE.

Last year, through these green trees I used to see
The flags down in the village, white and red,
Now float aloft for some high victory,
Now droop half-mast for some brave soldier dead.

This year, green leaves and blossoms cover all,
Where gleaming colors in the distance shone;
Through the thick leaves the sunbeams scarce can fall,
And all the past is dim and overgrown.

So may it be to all, in all this land,
Now that the bugle sounds its call no more;
Come, gentle Peace, with kind and pitying hand,
Come, hide away the sorrows of the war.

Yes, come to us, and to our fallen foes,
Upon whose heads the sternest judgment falls;
Would we add aught to their o'erwhelming woes,
Can they lose more, now they have lost their all?

The same grass grows above their dead and ours;
Upon all graves alike the summer throws
Her sweet memorial wreath of vines and flowers,
Clover and daisy, and the sweet wild rose.

Their dead and ours, in one sweet hope they rest,
Quiet and calm beneath the summer stars;
And some are gathered to the Saviour's breast,
In that fair land where there are no more wars.

Thou, who hast given us victory through Christ,
Thou, who hast set the patient bondman free,
Oh, lead us still, and by thy love unpriced,
Make this fair land all thou wouldst have it be.

LAURELS.

How from their glossy green they rear
Each pink and snow-white blossom,
The fairest flowers in Summer's wreath,
She wears them on her bosom.

I love the delicate wild-rose,
The daisies and sweet-briar;
Tall ferns and stately cardinals,
With robes of crimson fire.

But more than other wild-wood flowers,
By mountain, stream or meadow,
I love the laurel's clustered blooms,
Half hidden in the shadow.

They speak to me of dear ones gone
In triumph o'er death's river;
Well may these green New England hills,
Wear laurel-crowns forever.

And while I see the dark green leaves
  Their starry blossoms shading,
The laurels speak of better things,
  Of wreaths that are unfading.

The laurels on the hills of God,
  Beside the crystal river;
The wreath whose blossom fadeth not
  Forever and forever.

The flowers, which we who sow in tears,
  In many tears and sorrow,
May gather freely, if we will,
  When dawns the bright to-morrow.

Oh, laurels on a thousand hills,
  Ye bear my spirit thither;
Where by the waters crystal-clear,
  God's laurels never wither.

And we will work with perfect faith
  In His unchanging promise;
We strive to win the fadeless crown,
  Which no man taketh from us.

SISTERS OF CHARITY.

The summer air was fresh and sweet,
As if it had blown over
A thousand fields of butter-cups
And new mown hay and clover.
I met them when I crossed the street,
Robed as in deepest mourning,
A few white folds, like drifted snow,
Their simple, sole adorning.

You'd know them by their dress and by
The cross upon each bosom;
One face was like an opening rose,
Half rose-bud and half blossom.
The other, seen with just a glance—
Nor she nor I could tarry—
Was like a stately lily-bloom,
A very Fleur de Marie.

They did not see the pearly blooms
Upon the branches quiver;
They did not see the golden glow,
God's sunshine on the river.
They neither heard the wild-birds sing,
Nor saw the summer's beauty,
They walked with downcast eyes along
To some new field of duty.

Yet seemed they strangely out of place
In this fair world of ours;
These figures robed and veiled in black,
Among the sweet June flowers.

I honor them and love their work;
Among our dead and dying
Their hands have ministered to those
Upon the war field lying.

As they were merciful and kind,
God have them in His keeping!
And give them back a thousand fold
In answer to our weeping.
But, oh, I do not love the creed,
That teaching Christian duty,
Would shut from any human heart
God's world of love and beauty.

I know God would not have it so—
His plans are all above it,
He made all nature beautiful,
And gave us hearts to love it.
He would not have us walk in gloom,
This sunny world of ours;
Else wherefore is the wild-bird's song?
And why the sweet June flowers?

NIGHT.

Through the dim arches of earth's grand Cathedral,
Sound the slow footsteps of the silent night;
Like some high-priest in sacerdotal vestments,
Robed as for prayer and high liturgic rite.

Alone he stands and maketh intercession,
No mortal voice gives back the prayer again;
But the great sea, resonant from its caverns,
Fills the dark midnight, with a loud Amen.

The far-off stars are dimly burning tapers,
These rocks and sands are tessellated floors;
The palms and pine-trees are majestic columns,
The moonlit clouds are massive silver doors.

The tropic spice-trees, from their holy censers
Wave incense-clouds, as in the fanes of old;
And the calm starlight traces on the arches
Fantastic forms and arabesques of gold.

The very leaves weighed down with heavy dew-drops,
Bow their fair foreheads on the midnight air;
While the great Night breathes out upon the people
The benediction of a voiceless prayer.

Prayer for the earth and all its weary peoples,
Dreaming so idly, vainly as they must,
Whose little lives throb out their plaintive music
And then each blossom goeth up as dust.

Prayer for the lives that float like drifting sea-weeds
On the cold bosom of a shoreless sea;
Prayer for each soul that struggles through the darkness
Out from this life to dim futurity.

The Southern Cross and Northern Crown are telling
Of holy victories through suffering won;
Clouds, winds and waters give their voice responsive.
God is our Father, His great will be done.

THE SKY IS SOMETIMES DARK ABOVE.

The sky is sometimes dark above,
A changeless, heavy leaden gray;
And all the sounds I used to love
Are like faint music far away.

Yet while I watch, the clouds dissolve,
The vapors melt and roll away;
The chords of life are tuned again,
And all my might is perfect day.

A glory rests on shore and sea,
On ragged rock and gleaming spire;
And on the woods where every tree
Still wears October's robes of fire.

A sweet voice speaks, I know not whence,
I only know the words I hear;
And in this mellow Autumn glow
It tells me that my Lord is near.

No more the mournful cypress wreath—
For me, my guardian angel weaves
Bright flowers from off the golden walls,
Young, tender flowers and laurel leaves.

What do I seek? my Lord is near;
It is enough, enough, I say,
Though with the gleaners I have walked
And gathered little through the day.

The pearly gates I may not win,
For dangers compass us about;
I know not who shall enter in,
I know not who shall stand without.

I only know my Lord is near,
In light or shade, in calm or strife;
The sweet, sweet voices that I hear,
Like music warbles through my life.

SPRING TIME, IN 1865.

Now wears the earth her festal robes—
This sunny, sweet May weather;
And all the birds on all the trees
Are singing songs together.
That robin right above my head,
Upon an elm-bough swinging,
Has perched beside her half-built nest,
And cannot work for singing.

She sees the sunshine and the blooms,
The waving grass and clover,
And all her heart is full of joy,
Brimfull and running over;
And so she sings her song and pours
Her soul of sweetness in it;
Of all your foreign vocalists,
Not one can half begin it.

The streamlet flecked with flaky foam
Goes sparkling through the meadow;
All underneath the willow boughs,
Half sunshine and half shadow.
There's not a spray in all the woods
But buds and blossoms wreathe it,
And earth and sky are filled with song
So sweet I dare not breathe it.

And in the sunshine and the bloom,
In all the sweet May flowers,
Peace, God's pure angel, robed in white,
Walks this sad land of ours.
Her sweet voice whispers in my ear,
"Oh, faithless and faint-hearted,
From off the country of thy love
The shadow has departed."

And so I love these sweet May blooms,
I love the sunbeams shining;
Although among our laurel-boughs
Sad cypresses are twining.
Although beside one peaceful grave
Our tear-drops fall unheeded
For one, whose noble heart and hand
Were, oh, so sorely needed.

I cannot read the strange decree
That took our ruler from us;
I only see above the clouds
God's shining bow of promise.
I see far off, with tearful eyes,
That seek no explanations,
The blessing of eternal peace
That God shall give the nations.

THE STRANGER.

Where was his home, and his mother? Who was he?
A soldier, a brother, we knew little more;
Driven along like a leaf in the tempest,
Cast at our feet by the waves of the war.

Crushed, beaten down in the first flush of manhood,
Trembling and pale as the spray of the surf,
Down in the valley the picket-guard found him,
Lying down faint on the hard-trampled turf.

Here in the heart of the enemy's city,
Conquered last week by the might of our arms,
He fainted and died here, and knew not our pity,
Here in the midst of the battle's alarms.

We heard but a whisper of Jesus and Mary,
Of all the strange accents that fell from his tongue,
Here in his creed and his language a stranger,
He died all alone with us, friendless and young.

More like a boy than a man, scarcely twenty;
Eyes of soft hazel and lips like a girl's;
Lightly those twenty suns must have shone on him,
On his fair brow and its clustering curls.

Through the night-watches we lingered beside him,
Softly we closed those dark, beautiful eyes;
Why did he come to us, why did we love him?
Had he found friends and a home in the skies?

Slowly we wrapped his dark mantle around him,
There lay our holy, our beautiful dead;
Down in the Florida blossoms he's sleeping,
Wild birds are caroling over his head.

HEARTSEASE—GARDEN VIOLETS

All the flowers are withered,
All their beauty lost,
Covered up with crystals,
Crystals of the frost.

Where the queenly lilies
Bloomed beside the walks,
There is nothing left me
But the withered stalks.

Nothing but the heartsease,
With a tearful eye,
Smiling through its tear-drops,
Whispering, "Here am I."

Darling little heartsease,
Confident and calm,
With its cheek of velvet
And its breath of balm.

Nothing of its sweetness
Or its beauty lost;
Blooming in November,
Underneath the frost.

Darling little heartsease,
Hoping for the best,
Though the winter storm-clouds
Linger in the West.

Lighting up November
With the smile of May,
I can hear the heartsease
Whisper through the day.

Never mind the dark clouds,
There's bright blue above,
I, a little flower,
Tell you, God is Love.

THE FIELD IS THE WORLD.

A wide, wide field, all ready for the harvest,
Before the wind, low bends the golden grain;
A wide, wide field, forever stretching onward,
Its only limit is the bounding main.

Lo, as we stand here, ever gazing westward,
Before our eyes a mighty scene unrolls,
The field is ready, but where are the reapers
To gather up the multitude of souls?

Down in dark mines so many thousands labor,
They toil for us with worn and weary hands;
Along our shores, along our shining rivers,
Year after year, they gather golden sands.

And who is there to tell them of the treasures,
The wealth unpriced that earth can never give?
What voice shall tell them of the love of Jesus,
Who gives them food that they may eat and live?

Church of the West, to thee our hearts are yearning,
As to the distant hills we lift our eyes;
The fields are ready, waiting for the harvest,
Go out in might, and win the golden prize.

Church of the West, here, where the broad Atlantic
Laves all our shores, this solemn, starry night,
We breathe our prayers, God speed thee in thy labors,
And give thee strength to do thy work aright.

ELIZABETH BROWNING.

She died in Italy, is buried there,
With all that cloud of pink and purple bloom,
Floating so lightly round her grass-grown tomb;
With all sweet influences in the air.

Buried in Italy, forever blent
With all sweet visions of eternal bloom,
With Florence's soft sky and sweet perfume,
Each ivied stone the poet's monument.

The sweet wild rose, whose tender petals fall,
While crimson life throbs through each tender vein,
The wreathing ivy on the purple plain,
The honeysuckles twining o'er the wall.

The sunset light on burning bush and tree,
The golden gleam on classic Arno's wave,
All whisper with sweet voices round thy grave,
And even in death, their voices welcome thee.

Gone, with that glory on each shining curl,
That holy light upon thy sweet, pale face;
'Twas well to give the casket such a place,
An angel came and took away the pearl;

Shrined, shrined forever in that holy land,
Become a part of all the things we love,
Another thought linked with the plain and grove,
The shining sea-weed and the shining sand.

Cold are those lips whose words our spirits thrilled
Out in the future, in the dim unknown;
Her pure soul bows before the great white Throne—
Her mission to the people is fulfilled.

A SUMMER NIGHT.

The sultry sun goes slowly down,
The dull red golden bars
Fade slowly through the blinds, and now
Soft shine the summer stars.

To-day the summer sun was hot,
The leaves were brown and dry;
The sun was like a brazen ball
Set in a brazen sky.

To-night the starlight o'er it all
Some fairy tissue weaves;
The air is cool, I cannot see
The dust upon the leaves.

I cannot tell you half I hear,
Nor half the soft breeze sings;
I only know God's world is full
Of all pure, holy things.

I know that He is very good,
And all His world is fair;
What if the domes we dreamers build
Do melt away in air?

In all this holy silent night,
And through these shadows dim,
A gentle voice is calling us
Up, upward, unto Him.

RUINS.

"Romance and poetry, moss, ivy, lichens, and wall flowers need ruins to make them grow."—HAWTHORNE.

We have no past, no mystery, no dark and gloomy wrong,
No broken walls for flowers to climb, and ivy-wreaths of song,
No crumbling stones where shrouding vines their graceful branches toss,
No ruins dark, whereon may grow the lichens and the moss.

So Hawthorne wrote in years gone by, but ere his graceful pen
Had finished all its magic work, before the eyes of men
A cloud had risen on the sky; these years of civil war
Had blotted out the words he wrote, and they are true no more.

Hark, from the sandy southern shore, there sounds the rolling drum,
There's history enough in that to fill the years to come;
Look at those shatter'd fortresses, and at the lurid stain,
That in this golden summer day clouds all the uncut grain.

No past! In our New England homes go hear its echoes there,
Where last year's bride is weeping now above a wave of hair,
And folded with her treasures lies a little silken rag—
She knows how precious was the life poured out to win that flag.

We with no past, no mystery, no dark and gloomy wrong!
See where our brothers drag their chains so wearily along,
place for moss and ivies green! Would God that it were so;
Would that we had no ruins, where these mournful vines could grow!

VIGILATE.

Say, when He cometh will He find us waiting,
Our lamps, bright burning, ready for our Lord?
Behold He cometh quickly, very quickly,
Bearing with Him our wondrous great reward.

Last year our ears could hardly hear his footsteps,
For all our land was filled with war alarms;
On hill and shore, where once the storm was raging,
Christ's little children sing triumphant psalms.

See once again, the same sweet, holy picture,
On which, long years ago, the angels smiled;
The starry night, the shepherds bending lowly,
The blessed Virgin and her royal child.

As He came then, our Prince, our Lord and Saviour,
So will He come again; oh, hear His call,
His warning call, and go ye out to meet Him,
For Christ may come, this Advent, to us all.

No warning note shall sound at His appearing,
The sun will rise just as it did this day;
The mountain tops shall flush with golden glory;
The morning mists shall melt in light away.

All wait for Him—none knoweth of His coming;
It may be eventide or early day;
We only hear His footsteps on the mountain—
We only know He is not far away.

Oh, wait and watch, for blessed are those servants
Who yet are faithful, though their Lord delay.
Stand in your place, your lamps all trimmed and burning—
He cometh quickly, Christian, watch and pray.

ADVENT.

IN WAR-TIME.

To-NIGHT I heard the children
Going on their homeward way,
Singing "Carol, Carol Christians,"
A song for Christmas day;
And sweet thoughts came like music,
Just as I listened then—
Thoughts of the year going from us,
And Advent come again.

I thought that other voices
  Were chanting it abroad;
That other lips were singing
  The coming of the Lord.
I wonder in my spirit
  If all this crowd we meet,
This winding, long procession,
  Down all the lighted street;

I wonder if they hear it,
  The song so glad and free,
That makes this gloomy evening
  So beautiful to me;
The dark night is transfigured,
  And where the shadows fall,
A clearer light than sunlight
  Is streaming over all.

Oh, Christian, clasp thine armor,
  Not yet the crown is won;
There's so much wrong around us,
  And so much left undone,
We know the world's great struggles
  Are harder than we thought;
Our rulers and our people
  Take counsel, but for nought.

Why do men grope in darkness?
  Why will they never see
That God would make men holy,
  As well as make them free?
Oh, weary people, sighing,
  "When will these sorrows cease?"
Christ comes to heal the nations,
  And give His children peace.

The leaves lie dead and dying;
Oh, Christian, it may be
Next Summer's crown of green leaves
Is not for you and me.
The tender blush of Springtime
Upon our graves may fall;
Next year we may not hear it—
The solemn Advent call.

Learn we by prayer and watching,
To count all gain as loss;
Learn we to suffer hardness,
As soldiers of the cross;
To strengthen what remaineth,
And work, while work we may;
The light is on the mountains,
And it is almost day.

Again, through aisles and arches,
Ring out triumphant psalms;
Again the Church is wreathing
Her laurel boughs and palms;
The promise of Christ's coming
Fills every sweet refrain;
The one, unchanging promise,
That Christ shall come again.

The promise of His coming,
The dawning of the day;
No clouds of earth shall mar it,
Nor hide its light away;
The one hope of the people,
The rising of the star,
Which, in the ancient ages,
The Magi saw afar.

This world of ours is weary
Of bitterness and pain;
The sighing of the captives,
The mourning for the slain.
As men in dreary prisons
Cry out for swift release,
The world cries out for Jesus—
For love, and light, and peace.

Behold, He surely cometh,
He will not long delay;
Each Advent that we welcome,
Shall hasten on the day;
Oh! while ye wreathe the garlands,
The garlands of the feast,
And while ye see the day-star
Arising in the East,

Pray ye, through Christ who loves us,
That when next Advent comes,
Man may not mar its music
With all these battle-drums;
Pray ye for those who hate us,
That by His love unpriced,
The children of one Father
May yet be one in Christ.

God send his benediction
Where'er his free winds blow;
Beside our Infant Saviour
We call no man our foe.
God give to us the spirit
Of gentleness and love,
That all our hearts may echo
The angels' song above.

CHRISTMAS.

Again our mother calls,
Along her ivied walls;
Again the Christmas starlight with a softened beauty falls,
And Christian hands entwine
The myrtle and the vine;
Again, in silver chalices, fair gleams the holy wine.

Again, we pilgrims stand
Upon the holy land,
Where sweep the waves of Galilee along the shining sand;
And borne on eastern balms,
Through all these holy calms,
We hear the angel-music in Judea's crown of palms.

The flocks all fleecy white—
The shepherds in the night
Shine through the mist of ages, with a calm, clear, holy light;
And in coarse garments dressed,
The child and mother rest—
Sweet Mary, pale and beautiful, her babe upon her breast.

All through our Christmas mirth,
By his own lowly birth,
Our Saviour calls his children from the pomp and pride of earth—
He calleth us to-day;
Our treasures all decay;
His love is never weary and can never fade away.

That sweet, strange voice we know,
We hear it whisper low,
In every holy starbeam that trembles on the snow;
Oh! while Thy star we see,
Lead, lead us nearer Thee,
Until we sing our Christmas hymn beside the jasper sea.

LENT.

All the laurels and ivies lie withered,
The glad Jubilate has ceased;
And the sad passion-flowers are twining,
Where once hung the wreaths of the feast.

Our litanies sadly ascending,
Are breathed by the suppliant throng;
And the moan of a low miserere
Goes up with each echoing song.

But the world may be better and purer
For prayers that we offer to-day;
Oh, ye who are weary of watching,
Think, think of this truth as ye pray.

So many, such dissonant voices
To-day from the people arise;
Such conflicts within and around us,
Such darkness and gloom in the skies.

This stain on the fair earth's pure bosom;
These battle-flags gleaming abroad;
While the Church like a mourner is kneeling
Low, low at the feet of the Lord.

She mourns for her altars in ruins—
She mourns o'er each desolate shrine;
The cypress and lichen is growing,
Where once gleamed the sacrament wine.

Through the rustle of proud waving banners,
And through every roll of the gun,
She hears but the voice of her Leader,
His prayer, "that they all may be one."

Why strive ye for wreaths that will wither?
Nay, count all this world's wealth as loss,
And throng ye her temples, ye people,
And bend at the foot of the Cross.

Enough, if our Saviour accept it,
The offering we bring Him to-day;
His smile is a light and a glory,
A joy that none taketh away.

LENTEN PRAYERS,

AT ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, NEW HAVEN.

In quiet aisles among the kneeling people,
Our Saviour passeth by with gifts unpriced;
And sweetly sounds our mother's voice of pleading—
My little children, will you come to Christ?

Will ye not come? this Lent is swiftly passing—
These calm, sad hours of penitence and prayer;
A few short weeks and they are gone forever,
And Easter anthems thrill the morning air.

The years go on; so many souls are dying—
So many lost—how can our lips be dumb?
Let him that heareth tell his erring brother;
"Oh, come to Christ, the fount of healing, come.

Another year to thee may not be given;
No voice may call thee, and no church bells ring;
Another year, it may be thou wilt slumber
Beneath the early blossoms of the Spring.

The sunset shadows wrap the kneeling people;
The sunset glories gild these ivied walls;
And on our brows, like some sweet benediction,
The calm, still shadow of the evening falls.

Oh, children, tired and weary of life's battle,
Jesus of Nazareth is passing by;
Here, in the hush of silent prayer He cometh—
Lift up your hearts, behold He draweth nigh.

Come, while He waiteth in His great compassion,
Come, with a faith that never can grow dim;
And all your lives shall wear a brighter sunshine
For this one hour in prayer, alone with Him.

WILL YE, ALSO, GO AWAY?

In festive halls, loud swells triumphant music,
In full, rich measures throb the golden hours;
The sweet, pale lilies languish in the garlands,
The air is heavy with a thousand flowers.

On fair young brows the starry lights are gleaming,
Bright gems are burning there, and down the street;
The night wind wafts the music of the revel,
The sound of harping and the dancers' feet.

"Oh, life is short, and youth and hope are fleeting,
Come with the revelers," the minstrels say;
Yet, through the night, a low, sad voice is speaking,
"My little children, will ye go away?"

Oh, child of God, our Christmas wreaths have faded,
The laurel boughs, the wreaths of pine and fir;
The Church we love wears only wreaths of cypress;
The air is sweet with sad funereal myrrh.

Now go we with our Lord to share His vigils,
His trials, His temptations, if we may;
Heed not the voice, the music of the revel—
So many gone, will ye, too, go away?

These throbbing songs shall die in misereres,
They fade and fall, the lilies of the feast;
The gay young revelers, will they be ready
When His great day shall lighten in the East?

Oh, child of God, so many angels watch thee,
Stand on thy guard, lay not thine armor down,
Nor grieve, if for one hour thy Lord shall call thee
To share His Cross, so shalt thou wear His crown.

EASTER-TIDE.

I AM THE RESURRECTION.

In holy Palestine, beside a tomb,
The vernal breezes breathe a sweet perfume;
List—through the air a glorious voice is poured,
"I am the Resurrection," saith the Lord.

Judea's vales a sound of gladness fills,
From far beyond the everlasting hills
The anthem rolls, as from an angel's chord,
"I am the Resurrection," saith the Lord.

And when these mortal frames return to dust,
We lay our loved ones down in perfect trust;
Unchangeable forever is His word—
"I am the Resurrection," saith the Lord.

SUNRISE SERVICES ON EASTER DAY.

The chill March morning's early ray
Left rose-tints on the forests gray;
And gently through the budding trees
Came murmurs of the morning breeze.

A wild bird sang a carol gay,
Perhaps it knew 'twas Easter Day;
Perhaps that little hymn was poured
An Easter anthem to our Lord.

The Church was filled with chant and prayer,
Glad echoes woke the morning air ;
Sweet psalms and glorias arose
To Christ triumphant o'er his foes.

The sunlight fell, a golden glow,
On all the kneeling throng below ;
Till lengthened aisle and echoing choir
Were filled with floods of softened fire.

Within the font the lilies fair
Breathed out their incense on the air ;
Just as they bloomed that bright Spring day,
When angels rolled the stone away,

And chant and prayer were borne along,
To mingle in the angel-song ;
And all that golden glow the while
Beamed on us like our dear Lord's smile.

We go from vigils, fasts, and prayers,
To daily work and daily cares ;
Around us is that sunlight poured,
To keep us near our risen Lord.

THANKSGIVING IN NEW ENGLAND IN 1862

Yes, they all came home together,
To the old house on the farm;
Brothers, sisters, little children,
But the day had lost a charm.

Oh, the places round the fireside!
Places that the strangers fill;
Oh, the cold and dreary north wind
Round the graves on Malvern Hill!

Out upon the bleak, brown hillside,
Where the restless pine trees moan,
One is lying in their shadow,
Through this autumn night alone.

With his soldier cloak around him,
He is resting from the strife,
But we could not smooth his pillow—
Could not cheer the parting life.

One more, wounded at Antietam,
In his boyhood stricken down;
Clay-cold cheek and brow of marble
Resting on his laurel-crown.

Slowly, tenderly they brought him
In New England soil to rest;
So we wreathed the white immortelles,
And we laid them on his breast.

Hark! the chime of soft, sweet voices!
Music ringing through the hall;
But a sound no tongue can utter,
Murmurs through its rise and fall.

Like the far-off noise of armies,
Like the hollow roll of drums,
From the dim, blue line of waters,
Sadly, plaintively it comes.

Blind and foolish, we who murmur;
Holy, powerful and calm;
God is guiding on the people,
Though we may not feel His arm.

Something clearer than the starlight
Sleeps upon those quiet graves;
Glows above the blue Potomac;
Glows above its storied waves.

In their watches on the mountains,
They have seen His rising Star;
They have looked upon His beauty,
He is with them where they are.

So we kept a glad Thanksgiving,
In this year of grief and care,
And we heard their spirit-voices,
When we said our evening prayer.

A SOLDIER'S FUNERAL.

All down the street a restless throng
Is passing ever on its way;
And in the golden Summer day,
A sad procession winds along.

Above them all the Elm-trees wave,
The soft clouds float along the sky;
I know these men are bearing by
A soldier to a soldier's grave.

Down through the crowd the red flag gleams,
I hear the tread of many feet;
One echo from that crowded street
Throbs like wild music through my dreams.

Yes, lay the red flag on his breast,
Let this sad war be wrong or right,
It matters not to him—to-night
His comrades bear him home to rest.

It may be that this Summer day
Shines where some thoughtful blue-eyed girl
Sees through the amethyst and pearl,
The soft, sweet sunset fade away.

Poor, fluttering heart, that will not rest,
That soiled red flag too well she knows;
She takes a cypress and a rose
And lays them gently on his breast.

No more for him, these human woes,
So lay him where another Spring
Around the soldier's grave shall bring
The blossoms of the sweet wild rose.

We know God loved him, that is all,
  We trust he died with faith in Christ;
  Oh, Father, by His love unpriced,
Take thou these sufferers when they fall.

THE ENSIGN.

It's growing late, the setting sun
  Slants down these west declines,
And trembles on these fringed boughs,
  This leafy arch of pines.

How full of hope, I saw it rise
  A few short hours ago:
I shall not see it rise again,
  And yet the time moves slow.

I hope they'll take my Bible home,
  Although it's soiled and torn;
I know that mother 'll love the page
  My dying hand has worn.

I dreamed she came to me last night,
  She kissed me as I slept;
She bade me keep my Christian vow—
  Would God 'twere better kept.

And Annie, too, these orange-buds
  Are blood-stained now and wet,
I've kept them through this year of war,
  I think they're fragrant yet.

They'll take the colors that I love
And lay them on my breast;
In all this gleam of golden flowers
I lay me down to rest.

The fiery glow of camp and field,
It faded as it came;
'Twas hard to find my Saviour's steps
In these red paths of flame.

I need not struggle any more
To win my starry crown;
And oh, its very, very sweet,
To lay my armor down.

There'll no one wreath the myrtle flowers,
Nor plant a cypress vine—
Among so many, many graves,
There'll no one look for mine.

But yet not all the storms below,
Nor all the clouds above,
Nor war, nor peace, nor life, nor death,
Can hide us from God's love.

"DIE ZUKUNFT IST FUR SIE."

The cold north wind blows drearily,
The night fires throb and quiver
Above the plains of sheeted ice,
Above the inky river.

Oh, dark, deep skies, to you this night
How many hearts are turning;
How many from these ice-locked fields
Behold your brilliants burning?

They stand upon our hills to-night,
Crowned with this midnight glory,
Whose dying hands ere long shall write
Our country's proudest story.

They've flung their lives on battle's tide,
God bless each high endeavor,
And hold them in his own right hand,
Forever and forever.

The Future for us; yes, your words
Are true, my German brothers;
And God's great work upon us laid,
We would not leave for others.

The Future, see on distant hills
The first faint glow of dawning;
Though grief endureth for a night,
Joy cometh in the morning.

UNDER THE CLOUDS.

God leads us through an unknown land,
The way we cannot tell,
We know His star is in the clouds,
And that will guide us well.

How know we what the years may bring?
The mists along the shore
May hide the lilies of God's peace,
Or thorny crowns of war.

Dear friends, to whom these Summer days
Bring anxiousness and grief;
To whom the sweetness of the Spring
Brought solace nor relief,

I know your thoughts go back to-night
To those low, grassy graves;
Ye see in dreams the reedy banks,
The blue Virginian waves.

God comfort you, my friends in Christ,
One balm remains alone
To bring the sweetness back to life,
When other charms are flown.

In faith and patience let us wait;
These stormy years of war
Shall lead us to a nobler life
Than we have lived before.

Lift up your hearts in thankfulness,
The night is almost gone,
Read in this beauty on the hills
A promise of the dawn.

Pray, mothers, for your soldier-sons,
A stern, hard work is theirs;
They may have heard the angel-call,
Their souls may need your prayers.

Pray ye that they may all be Christ's,
Then, let the swift shot come,
It's all one way, in life or death,
To lead them nearer home.

God's thoughts are far above our thoughts,
And yet He is our Friend,
And He who loved His own on earth,
Will love them to the end.

Go, weary hearts, go work for Him,
Count earthly gain as loss;
Baptized with His baptism,
Shall we not bear His cross?

Dear Lord of life, in war or peace,
Oh, keep us near thy side;
It's growing dark, the shadows fall,—
Oh, Lord, with us abide.

THE GRAVES ON THE SHORE.

The rolling wave comes up the yellow sands,
The shining sands, the silent, golden sands,
It falls as shadows fall in weary lands;
It hides the lonely graves.

What is it through the grasses and the shells,
The rose-leaf shells, the sunlit silver shells?
Around those graves a voiceless beauty dwells—
The shore is holy ground.

The white anemones beneath the sea,
The purple sea, the great, pure, silent sea,
And all things beautiful, and strange, and free,
Send up their breath of love.

The river-waves throb upward to the stars,
The gentle stars, the tremulous, bright stars;
They watch the low mounds on the sandy bars,
And whisper, rest in peace.

AUTUMN LEAVES.

So the Summer passes from us,
So its beauty fades away;
In the softened purple shadows
Of the early Autumn day,
So the fragile blossoms wither,
So the little violets die;
Signs and tokens of the Summer—
Bright days gone forever by.

They have gathered in the harvests,
  They have bound the golden sheaves;
Now along the dusty roadside
  Fall the red and golden leaves;
So the Summer passes from us,
  So the evening shadows fall,
So a sad and pensive beauty
  Throws its mantle over all.

In the city of the Elm trees,
  There are golden tints, I know—
Golden Elm leaves ever falling,
  When the chilly west winds blow;
Crimson leaves are twined with ivies
  On old Trinity's dark walls,
Sprays of vine-leaves, crimson tinted,
  Clasp the stone towers of St. Paul's.

Everywhere the leaves are telling
  Of a beauty loved and lost;
Blossoms faded in the autumn,
  Green leaves withered by the frost;
Everywhere our hearts are yearning
  For a brighter, warmer sky,
Dreaming of that golden Summer,
  Where the blossoms never die.

Never droops a faded flower,
  Never falls a withered leaf,
Singing plaintive misereres,
  Songs of sorrow, songs of grief;
In the golden, golden Summer,
  Where no withered leaves shall fall,
We shall find our vanished treasures—
  Trust me, we shall find them all.

TUBEROSES.

TO E. L. M.

Such beauty, such passionate sweetness,
It floats on the indolent air,
Each breath of these beautiful flowers
Is poetry—no, 'tis a prayer.

Why do they not droop when we touch them?
We, stained with the sins of the strife;
They, pure as the lilies of heaven,
That float on the rivers of life.

So pure, none but angels should touch them,
Too sweet for us mortals to wear;
Saint Mary, the mother of Jesus,
Might wear these white buds in her hair.

Their fragrance, their beautiful whiteness,
A spell that I dare not to break,
They speak in the great intercession,
God loveth the world for their sake.

They call me, I cannot resist them,
Such voices are speaking to me,
And the echo they wake in my spirit,
Is "Nearer, my God, unto Thee."

Old words, we have sung them so often,
But I think that I know what they mean;
With these tuberoses before me,
Half hidden in scarlet and green.

Alas, that such beauty should wither!
I look on their petals and pray
For a heart that is pure as the blossoms,
As stainless and holy as they.

For a part in the great resurrection,
Where all things are holy and fair,
And a name that I love like the flowers,
Will ever be breathed in my prayer.

ASPIRATIONS.

What shall I do with this another year?
Thy latest gift, oh, Thou, my Saviour dear,
In this year's joy or grief, its gain or loss,
Abide with me, and draw me near Thy cross.

Thy sweet, low voice upon my spirit falls,
Like the faint music from the golden walls;
Strange, tender words, I know not what they be,
Bend from thy starry throne and speak to me.

Hush every voice that rises in my breast,
Love's earnest plaint, ambition's wild unrest,
Speak to this erring heart, this wayward will,
Bid every human passion, "Peace, be still."

What shall I do this year, what work for Thee?
Thou who hast done so much, so much for me,
Nerve these weak hands to serve Thee in the strife,
Write on my heart the story of Thy life.

This holy time, the hills are all aglow,
I hear the angel footfalls on the snow,
And in my dreams I see the glory mild,
The Virgin Mother and the Holy Child.

Another year, oh, be the past forgiven,
Abide with me and draw me nearer heaven;
Heal Thou the sick, oh, Lord, the whole earth o'er,
Uphold the trembling, that they fall no more.

MY LIFE-WORK.

What if they do not heed, but meet
Thy love with idle scorning?
I bid thee stand, the Master says,
And watch until the morning.

And thou must learn to love through all,
Their hate with love repaying,
Yes, with true love a thousand fold,
Art thou my word obeying?

I said, Lord, tell me who are these?
Why must I give them warning?
I care not for their love and heed,
Still less their idle scorning.

I love my day-dreams and my books,
My gentle poet's pages,
The bards who sing their pleasant songs,
The minstrelsy of ages.

I love still waters, woodland glades,
The willowy blue river,
Where cool, sweet water lilies grow—
There would I stay forever.

All down the blossomy path, the rays
Through laurel leaves are streaming;
Here would I dream such golden dreams—
Why rouse me from my dreaming?

My Saviour spoke—And wouldst thou lay
Thy lifework on another?
Be thou a servant unto all,
So thou may'st gain thy brother.

And look not to the waving palms,
Nor to the crown above,
Go thou without one thought of self,
And do it all for love.

Go, and for my sake, love them all,
Thine idle pride restraining,
And sometimes think on Calvary—
'Twill stop thine heart's complaining.

COME TO THE WATERS.

"Ho, ye that thirst," now come ye to the waters,
Prophet of Israel, thy voice we hear
Through all this noise of strife, this storm of action,
Down through dim years, it speaketh loud and clear.

Ye who are fainting in life's hurried marches—
Long is the way, the yellow sands are hot;
Ye know there is a fountain of refreshment,
Ye hear the waters, oh, why come ye not?

You who cry out for God's great gift of healing,
For words and thoughts to soothe a people's pain;
Ye who are struggling, feeble and faint-hearted,
Come to the waters—come, the way is plain.

Why will ye wait until the day is ended?
A sweet voice calls us through the battle's roar;
Ye who are fainting, falling by the way-side,
Come to the waters—come, and thirst no more.

MIDWINTER.

On all the hills the snow-drifts lie,
The ice fields glitter in the light,
The full moon sails the starry sky,
Through cloudy waves of crystal white.

There's not a place where e'er you pass,
For one poor flower to bud and blow;
There's not a blade of withered grass,
But all is white and stainless snow.

Oh, rose-vines waving on the wall,
Oh, russet mounds of withered leaves,
The snows are drifting over all,
For you the chilly north wind grieves.

For all your bloom once crimson dyed,
Your fragrant breath of balm and spice,
For all your life's warm passion-tide,
Sealed with a seal of snow and ice;

For every blossom fair and sweet,
That faded in the autumn frost,
For every leaf beneath my feet,
For every pearly petal lost;

For all these human hearts of ours,
Whose fairest blossoms fade and die;
While snow-wreaths gather on the flowers,
Beneath the chilly Winter's sky.

Yet, where the snow-drifts fall to-day,
The sweet May flowers shall bud and bloom;
The robin's joyous roundelay
Shall charm away the Winter's gloom.

And in that fairest Spring of all,
Far in the golden years to be,
These earthly flowers that fade and fall,
Shall bloom again for you and me.

TO MIRIAM,

ON THE DAY OF HER BAPTISM.

Upon thy brow the Church has set
Her seal of love unpriced;
And priestly hands have numbered thee
Among the flock of Christ.

One more to fight the fight of faith,
One more to win the crown,
When God shall call his faithful child
To lay her armor down.

Too little hands to work for Him
Who hears the birdling's call,
Who gently leads the little ones,
Who knows and loves them all.

Two little feet to follow Christ,
As through the world they roam,
To follow in the narrow path
That leads His children home.

No sun need light that path by day,
No silver moon by night;
No cloud nor darkness hovers there,
For Jesus is its light.

Safe may'st thou tread that shining path
Through all this world of strife,
Until upon thy pearly brow
Shall gleam the crown of life.

May all good angels ever guard
The little Christian girl,
Till God shall gather Miriam
Within the gates of pearl.

MY MOTHER'S GRAVE.

One lone evergreen beside it
Points up to the sky above,
And below, the dark green myrtle
Clasps it with a clasp of love.

Softly falls the Summer starlight,
And it sometimes seems to me
There's a light that's purer, fairer,
Shining on that lonely tree.

Ten sweet Junes have scattered rose-leaves
On that low and grassy mound,
Since her sweet voice died in silence,
Since I heard its pleasant sound.

Years of pleasant, sunny childhood,
Give, oh, give it back to me;
Just one look, one word of blessing,
Only one—it cannot be.

Voice of sadness, voice of sweetness—
Let me hear it in my dreams;
I am tired of looking upward,
Far, far off the city gleams.

Lay your cool hand on my forehead,
Mother, kiss your child good night;
Shrouding grass and wreathing myrtle,
Wherefore hide her from my sight?

Oh, my lovely angel-mother,
In my dreams I see her now;
In her robes of shining whiteness,
With the starbeams on her brow.

One is watching, waiting for me,
Where the golden splendors fall;
Through the noise of many waters
I can hear her gentle call.

Guide us, Saviour, through the tempest,
Guide us safely to the shore,
Where the mother and her children
Shall be never parted more.

WE WOULD SEE JESUS.

We would see Jesus, is He far away?
How all our hearts have longed for Him to-day—
He is our Shepherd, why does He delay?

Dear Shepherd of the sheep, we are astray,
Our careless feet have wandered from thy way;
Now on the mountains dies the twilight ray.

We would see Jesus, we would hear his call,
On the dark mountains, we must faint and fall,
Oh, where is He, the Shepherd of us all?

There is no sound in all the earth as sweet
As the soft fall of our dear Shepherd's feet,
Going o'er the hills, his erring lambs to meet.

Oh, we have wandered, draw us near to Thee,
Lead, lead us homeward, where we fain would be—
Night cometh quickly when no man can see.

WOODBURY, CONN.

I love these grand New England hills,
That rear their pines on high,
Their stately crown of evergreens
Beneath this Summer sky.

LINES TO A BRIDE.

Now gleaming through the morning mists,
  These giant rocks of old,
Now canopied by sunset clouds
  Of amethyst and gold.

How softly on the rocky steeps
  The Summer starlight shines,
And marks with lightest tracery
  The shadows of the pines.

I see the starlight on the hills,
  The fringèd pines I see;
The hills, and rocks, and evergreens,
  Are singing songs to me.

My sweet June roses fade and die,
  But from these golden hours
I bear a pleasant memory,
  That fades not with the flowers.

LINES TO A BRIDE.

Joy to the bride, for whom to-day
  The orange flowers are blooming;
For whom to-day the bridal rose
  Breathes out its sweet perfuming.

When through the hallowed arch and aisle
  The sunset shadows falter,
When robed and veiled in bridal white,
  She stands before the altar.

May all good angels hover near
The gentle bride caressing;
And breathe above her as she kneels,
Their choicest words of blessing.

Oh, wreathe the orange buds and blooms,
In all these golden hours;
For her the fairest rose of all
Among the bridal flowers.

EVENING SERVICES AT ST. PAUL'S, NEW HAVEN,

PREPARATORY TO THE HOLY COMMUNION.

Soft through the windows fades the dying day,
And half in light, and half in pensive shade,
Calm, pure and beautiful, the twilight wanes.
And in the silence and the shadowy glooms,
A stranger among strangers as I kneel,
Our evening prayers that bear our hearts to Heaven,
Come softly to my ear, I am at home.

A few, alone, and yet not all alone,
For, through the aisle and round the chancel fair,
I seem to hear the sound of angels' wings,
Like a sweet benediction.
Soft and low,
Now rise in gentle, earnest, pleading tones,
The prayer for pardon and the prayer for peace.
And now the prophet's plaintive, touching strain,
Mourning a city beautiful, yet doomed;

Mourning the faded glories of his land;
And now the searching words of earnestness,
Lest one among the little group should come
Without a wedding garment to the feast.

The leaves are crimson on the clinging vines,
And one by one in the autumnal wind,
The tinted sprays drop shivering to the ground;
The last sweet hymn in silence dies away,
And all the Church its walls and mantling vines,
Grow dim and dark, wrapped in these early shades.
The lamps burn dimly down the noisy street—
The gloom of night is on these fringed pines;
And in my heart the memory of that hour
Comes calm, and beautiful, and full of peace.

THE ORPHANS.

Through the world they wander lonely,
Rough, hard paths their feet must tread;
Who shall care for them and love them?
Who will give these children bread?

When you heard the thrilling war news,
When you flung your banners out,
When your very streets were vocal
With the people's joyous shout;

Then these little ones were weeping;
"We have won," the people said,
But the children whispered softly,
Whispered sadly, "Father's dead."

Christian men, a voice is calling
Out of weakness, want and pain,
Do not let these soldiers' children
Think their fathers died in vain.

These are Jesus' little children,
Scattered fatherless abroad;
Love them as you love your country;
Love them as you love your God.

SUMMER DAYS.

Around the porch the roses bloom,
Just as they bloomed a year ago;
As sweet as then their fragrant breath,
Their chalices of pearl and snow.

The Summer clouds sail slowly by,
And shadow all the mountain grass;
The laurels blossom on the hills,
The lilies bloom where e'er they pass.

And so the golden years go by,
And sing to me their songs of cheer;
I sit and listen as they pass,
And thank my God for what I hear.

I would not ever question why,
I would not ask from whence they come,
The songs that fill the evening sky,
Sweet songs of faith, of love, and home.

And in the glow of Summer days,
Where sadness never hath a part,
I sing a grateful song to Him,
Who took the shadow from my heart;

The sorrow from the golden year,
The bitter from my cup of life;
'Tis easy now to work for Him,
To struggle through a weary strife.

I know not what there yet may be
To shake the staff whereon I lean,
I see so many mysteries,
And cannot fathom all they mean.

I leave it all in kindest hands,
With One whose love can ne'er grow cold,
Until my days and years are gone,
And life is as a story told.

IN MEMORIAM.

Say, did he hear it through the cedar shade?
The low voice clearer than the rolling gun,
As o'er his brow the Southern night-wind played;
Rest, soldier, rest, thy laurel wreath is won.

And were there angels on the battle plain,
Touching, with holy hands, his sunburnt brow?
And did they soothe him in his death of pain,
God's ministering spirits then as now?

But that is past; rest, brave young soldier, rest,
The first last battle won, the work is o'er.
Two pale hands folded on a silent breast,
Two feet to tread the weary march no more.

Silence and death have sealed those marble lips,
The brave, true soul that lit the flashing eye,
It is not darkened in a long eclipse:
God lit that lamp—its flame can never die.

He rests in peace; say, shall the God who hears
An infant's moan, neglect the Nation's cry?
Thou who hast seen this wave of blood and tears,
Receive our dear ones when they fall and die.

THE WORK OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMISSION.

The fields are white, go, gather in the harvest;
What holier work on earth could Christian ask?
Then, if like Christ, ye truly love the people,
Bend down in prayer, then forward to the task.

Ye hear the call, that call so sad and plaintive,
"We faint and fall—oh! hasten on your way,"
From that long line of heavy ambulances,
Slow, winding through Virginia to-day.

Pledged, pledged to nurse our wounded and our dying,
With patient love that labors and endures;
And tenderly as ye shall work your mission,
May God forever deal with you and yours.

As ye go out and in among our dying,
Our blessing shall be with you night and day;
The peace that passes human understanding—
Peace that earth cannot give nor take away.

When before men, and seraphs, and archangels,
Eternity's great mystery unrolls,
When God shall gather up his scattered jewels,
When round Him throngs the multitude of souls

There find your place, high on God's roll of honor,
By tenderness and patience nobly won;
There shine as stars forever and forever,
The Cross laid down, the great work bravely won.

HOPE.

The paly sunset lights the distant spire,
The north wind murmurs through the dark-green pines;
Where last year's roses burned with crimson fire,
No leaf, nor calyx lingers on the vines.

Yet shall the circling year bring Spring again,
To smile in sweetness on our fields of gloom;
These leafless boughs shall bud and blossom then,
And bear aloft their clouds of purple bloom.

Along the meadows shall green grasses spring,
And sweet anemones their leaves unclose;
The brooks shall murmur and the wild birds sing—
This ice-bound earth shall blossom as the rose.

As is this earth bound up in chains to-day,
To what it is when Spring has set it free,
So are we in our prison house of clay,
To what, through Christ our Lord, we yet may be.

What if our last year's roses droop and fall,
The flowers of Paradise shall never fade;
God shall restore them, He restoreth all;
Trust Him, my soul, and be not thou afraid.

THE POET OF THE CHRISTIAN YEAR.

Oh, noblest heart in England,
Oh, Poet of my love;
Gone from this life of struggling,
To perfect rest above.

Beneath the ivied arches
Thy golden harp is still;
But we may hear its echoes
Forever, if we will.

On England's hallowed greensward
There's one more holy spot—
The grass-grown grave of Keble—
Let rude hands touch it not.

Green wave the ivies o'er it,
Soft fall the evening dew;
Thy poet, Christian England,
Was dear to us as you.

Oh, noblest heart in England!
Oh, holy man of God!
We lay our wreath of cypress
Upon the grassy sod.

Though waters roll between us,
There's one more bond unpriced,
To bind our hearts together,
And bind us all to Christ.

THE BIRD'S NEST IN THE WINDOW.

There they sit and tell me stories,
In this rosy blooming time:
Sometimes it's in common bird-talk,
Sometimes gushing into rhyme;

Telling of the land of blossoms,
Where there comes no winter cold,
Of the fields of sunny flowers,
Very fields of Cloth of Gold.

They have been where many armies
Flung their pennons to the breeze;
Now the Spanish moss is waving
Long dark banners from the trees;

Where the tiny waving signals
Gave strange orders in the strife;
While upon those little banners
Hung a people's thread of life.

All is quiet there, they tell me,
Over all the cypress waves;
And the bright magnolia blossoms
Fall so softly on the graves.

All is quiet, grass is growing,
Vines have trailed the camp-ground o'er;
All is quiet, save the ripple
Of sweet waters on the shore.

Over all blue skies are bending,
Sweet June sunshine lights it all;
Snowy roses wreathe their garlands,
Snowy petals softly fall.

Not like Poe's black dismal raven
Is the bird above my door;
That one on the bust of Pallas
Croaked its mournful "Nevermore."

You are full of hope and promise
Of the golden days to be,
Birdie, up there in the window,
Singing pleasant songs to me.

AT EVENTIDE.

Kiss me good night, mother,
Daylight is done;
Now from the golden west
Fadeth the sun.
Yet I am far from
The home I desired,
Kiss me good night, mother;
Mother, I'm tired.

Lo, I have labored long,
All through the day;
Now the sweet sunset
Has faded away.
When shall I do this
My life-work aright?
Kiss me good night, mother;
Kiss me good night.

Life is all weariness,
Sorrow and strife;
And who is the better
To-day for my life?
Come to me, mother,
Thou angel of light!
I'm heart-weary—brain-weary—
Kiss me good night.

NO HEART BUT HATH ITS SORROW.

No heart but hath its sorrow,
  No heart but hath its loss;
No heart but bears in secret
  The burden of the Cross.

No heart but hath its treasures,
  Its little gems laid by;
All surely, safely guarded
  From every careless eye.

Perhaps a broken rose bud,
  Perhaps a silken curl:
More precious than the ruby,
  And amethyst, and pearl.

No heart but beats sweet music,
  A poem wild and strong;
No human heart is sleeping,
  That has not throbbed with song.

Speak tenderly and truly
  To all, whoe'er thou art;
Man looketh only outward,
  God looketh on the heart.

After life's weary marches
  Each plaintive song shall be
A gloria of triumph
  For all eternity.

PENSEES.

So in the dark we grasp at things divine,
  Things far too high for human hands to reach;
So do we take our visions sent from God,
  And tell them all in idle, rhyming speech.

Perhaps we write good words in earnest truth,
  While God's good Spirit with our spirits strives:
And then, alas! the page is interlined
  With daily contradictions of our lives.

Father, forgive, for Thou alone canst tell
  Wherein my soul-life wanders from my creed;
And so direct me in Thy holy way,
  That I may do Thy work in very deed.

Oh, may this do some little work for Thee!
  And pardon it and me, whate'er is wrong;
I also would that, in this weary world,
  Some heart may be the better for my song.

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